

REMEMBERING

RONDA WIEDERHOLT



SUBMITTED

Ronda Lea Wiederholt (right) hugs her friend and colleague Kara Puche in the Northwest campus dining office. The two worked together for 17 years.

Northwest community mourns loss, celebrates life

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | @calfee_kc

“You’re never lost. If you miss your exit, you’re just taking the scenic route home.”

Ronda Lea Wiederholt, 60, of Clyde, Missouri, began a legacy when she told her children this truth. And now, after her death, her family, friends and colleagues remember this saying as a testament to who she was.

After fighting COVID-19 for three months, she died from complications related to the virus at Mosaic Medical Center - St. Joseph Jan. 24.

At Northwest, Ronda Wiederholt was known as the cheerful, welcoming campus dining employee of 30 years. She gave a part of herself to everyone she encountered, her family said, and because she did, she now lives on through the lives she touched.

Sister’s love

Ronda Wiederholt was born in Denver, Colorado, Aug. 15, 1960. She lived there for some time, then moved to Florida before finally residing in Clyde, Missouri. The village of 63 people became a quaint home beloved by her family.

Ronda Wiederholt’s parents, Ora B. Wiley and Sarah Lou Wiley, preceded her in death. But years prior, both in Colorado and Missouri, camping was a staple in the Wiley home. It became a tradition Ronda Wiederholt would continue with her kids later in life. Last week, her children broke out pictures and talked of the old days when sleeping outdoors was a little easier for their mom.

“We would go on so many trips, even when we were young,” Lynnsey Cain, one of Ronda Wiederholt’s five children, said. “She

loved the outdoors.”

Ronda Wiederholt’s sister, Debra Stiens, sat next to Bobbi Jo Williams, the second of five children, and shared memories.

At the time of their mom’s death, Ronda Wiederholt gave Stiens a couple of photos showing the two sisters together by a tent and picnic table. Looking at them now, she remembers playing at a young age and making car rides entertaining.

“I thought that if anybody was going to get through COVID, as bad as she was, it was going to be Ronda.”

-KARA PUCHE

“It’s always been so important to her. We would play games and sing songs in the car instead of listening to the radio,” Stiens said. “That’s why, I think, she did that with her kids too.”

Going to state parks was a regular outing for Ronda Wiederholt and her children. This past year, Williams was able to take her mom and children on a trip to Orange Beach, Alabama, to visit some state parks. They didn’t go to the traditional beaches on the coast, but ones coined for their natural beauty.

And while Ronda Wiederholt loved to venture coast to coast, she also had a passion for giving back to her local community. Ronda Wiederholt and Stiens grew up as Girl Scouts. As adults, they worked alongside one another to lead Girl Scouts day camp in Maryville for nine years.

The two took thousands of young girls under their wing one

week out of the summer to do activities and bond through the organization. There were a lot of memories packed in the honor of leading the event, but Stiens shared one that will resonate with her for years to come. Her sister made sure a donated mirror from their mother stayed in the cabin so girls could fix their hair.

“Traditions and joy is big,” Stiens said.

Traditions and Joy

Ronda Wiederholt is survived by her husband of 43 years, Alan Bernard Wiederholt, her children, Jason Wiederholt, Alan Wiederholt, Tracy Hayden, Williams and Cain. Other survivors include 17 grandchildren, one great-grandchild and numerous nieces and nephews.

In addition to traveling, Ronda Wiederholt loved to spend time with family and play games to keep life light and fun. Her daughters are adamant that the traditions instilled in one another when they were young will continue on after their mother’s death.

The family will keep traveling, with destinations already planned for the coming years. The family’s wedding dance-offs to “We are Family” by Sister Sledge will continue. Camping and bonfires, a tradition which has brought on count-

less memories, will also continue in Ronda Wiederholt’s memory.

A tradition of deep, honest care is perhaps the greatest tradition Ronda Wiederholt’s family wishes to continue. Her daughters reflected on her presence within the family, and that her children’s children will know her love and affection as deeply as they did.

“From dance recitals to baseball to basketball to flags, she went to everything,” Hayden said.

After the funeral, Ronda Wiederholt’s daughters sat together, sharing joyous moments with their mother.

Hayden remembers spending a special Christmas at Silver Dollar City, an amusement park in Branson, Missouri, with her mom. They admired the lights and reminisced over stories of the past.

“Mine would be going to Disneyland for the first time as an adult,” Williams said.

“When we went to Clarksville, Tennessee, for my cousin’s graduation, my daughter was 6 months old,” Cain said. “We started a tradition that for each state we went to, we got a little magnet of that state.”

“It was my mom’s idea. We made this tradition to buy these little magnets for her so she could know where she’s been,” Cain said.

The family then talked about one year at Thanksgiving when the power went out. Ronda Wiederholt was determined to still have a meal with the family, and everyone had her back. They cooked a plethora of dishes on a campfire grill. Her sons used a blowtorch to melt the marshmallows on top of the sweet potatoes.

“There was no — you don’t just stop. We’re getting it done.”

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Mallett gives mid-year diversity report

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor | @andrewwegley

Almost exactly eight months after a racially insensitive video involving an incoming Northwest freshman circulated on Twitter last summer, the University’s Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion Justin Mallett presented the office’s mid-year report to Northwest’s Board of Regents Jan. 28, detailing the actions Northwest has taken to address issues of race and inclusion since the video first went viral.

The six-page document amounts to a comprehensive list of steps the University has taken in the last eight months, ranging from training and education efforts for faculty and staff to a change to Northwest’s Student Code of Conduct policy in regard to speech, which the Board approved in December.

Some changes — including the hiring of Diversity and Inclusion Coordinators Brittany Roberts and Jessie Peter — are already physically evident on Northwest’s campus, while others are more abstract.

One alteration Mallett has consistently touted is the implementation of an inclusive excellence framework, which aims to make racial equity an institution-wide priority rather than a task delegated to the Diversity and Inclusion Office.

When addressing the Board at its Jan. 28 meeting, Mallett didn’t summarize the entirety of the mid-year report, instead noting three highlights he wanted to emphasize. The associate provost again touched on the importance of the inclusive excellence framework while highlighting the University’s alignment with the national standards established by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.

In the third act of his address to the Board, Mallett underlined the Diversity and Inclusion Office’s continued commitment to furthering the agenda of equity — not just on Northwest’s campus, but in the surrounding community.



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN
Justin Mallett, Northwest’s associate provost of Diversity and Inclusion, presents the office’s mid-year report to the Board of Regents Jan. 28 in the J.W. Jones Union Ballroom.

“This entire campus has worked hard, but we can’t relax,” Mallett said. “And one of the things we’re doing because we can’t rest on this is, we’re expanding into the community as well. We want to make sure that our Maryville community is also comfortable having discussions on diversity and inclusion, because we can’t continue to say, ‘Well, Maryville is a racist institution, a racist town, insensitive,’ or anything like that, but not provide a blueprint or a framework to not be that way.”

Mallett’s statement drew the ire of Regent Jason Klindt, who sought clarification after Mallett described the frustrations many underrepresented students have expressed about the city.

“Dr. Mallett, I just want to go for a clarification there for some of the folks in the room,” Klindt said. “You said, ‘We can’t just continue to say that Maryville is a racist town.’ I don’t think anyone is actually saying that Maryville’s a racist town, but there might be some that put that out there. I just wanted to

give you an opportunity to maybe expand on that.”

“Sure,” said Mallett, who has expressed an uncomfortable distance between himself and the Maryville community. “So what I mean by that is, for our underrepresented population that’s in Maryville, sometimes the belief is that we don’t have the resources that are available ... and that we’re not bringing those things into our community — that’s a move of insensitivity. And the way our younger generation thinks nowadays, they will say, because of that insensitivity, they immediately go to racism.”

The moment shared between Klindt and Mallett served as the only point of even mild contention in a meeting that otherwise felt more like a procedural formality.

Throughout Mallett’s presentation and the meeting as a whole, the tone was generally positive, bordering on celebratory. Northwest’s President John Jasinski and Chair of the Board John Moore each offered their support for Mallett’s continued efforts as the group re-

flected on the last eight months of progress.

Mallett only pointed to one disappointment: the student completion rate of the University’s campus climate survey last fall, which only 8.6% of students completed — short of Northwest’s goal of 15%.

“As you remember, over the course of the summer, there was a lot of energy from our students. We had the hashtags. We had the posts. We had all these different things coming at us really fast and really quick, and the energy was really high,” Mallett said, referring to a flood of posts from Twitter users in late May describing incidents of racism at Northwest that they said largely went unaddressed by administrators, even when reported.

“So it was shocking when we put the campus climate survey out in the fall that the response rate was as low as it was.”

The hashtags in particular, which gained traction in response to Northwest’s decision to admit the student involved in the viral video, have been a point of emphasis for

the University. The posts led directly to the creation of the Bearcat Equity Program, a campus reporting platform for incidents of discrimination or bias.

When fielding questions from Moore about the Bearcat Equity Program, Mallett deferred to Matt Baker, the University’s assistant vice president of Student Affairs, who told the Board that he had never heard about a vast majority of the racist incidents shared on Twitter by students who claimed to have reported to Northwest employees.

“Students were sharing that things were happening on campus that none of us knew about,” Baker told the Board, echoing comments he made to The Missourian early last month. “That was probably one of the most concerning things.”

While the platform was built to combat those miscommunications, it’s unclear if Northwest has taken additional steps to avoid similar failures in face-to-face reporting of discrimination. When reflecting on further measures taken to ensure in-person reports were properly passed along, Jasinski, speaking with reporters after the meeting, did not cite any specific changes to the bias reporting process, instead noting several committees formed since May.

“Hey, look,” Jasinski said. “We’re trying to listen in various venues, so it isn’t just the Bearcat Equity Program. It’s through individuals; it’s through leaders and, frankly, it’s through those teams that we’ve put together. We’ve got the President’s Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Team that the senior leaders sit on the outside as kind of a fishbowl and listen to the input. (There’s) the Issues of Race Action Team — so, yes, there are several venues that we’re trying to gather input and then follow up on that input.”

More Board notes can be found online at nwmissourinews.com.

Nodaway County holds second mass vaccination event

MADELINE MAPES
Asst. News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

After the success of last week’s COVID-19 mass vaccination clinic on Jan. 26, the University, Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville and the Nodaway County Health Department held their second mass clinic Feb. 4.

Health Department Administrator Tom Patterson said the clinic will function the same way that they did last week.

President of Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville Nate Blackford said there have been some minor changes, mostly to improve foot traffic, to maintain social distancing and to increase the amount of people inoculated per minute.

“We are going to go from vaccinating five patients per minute to

eight patients per minute, per table,” Blackford said.

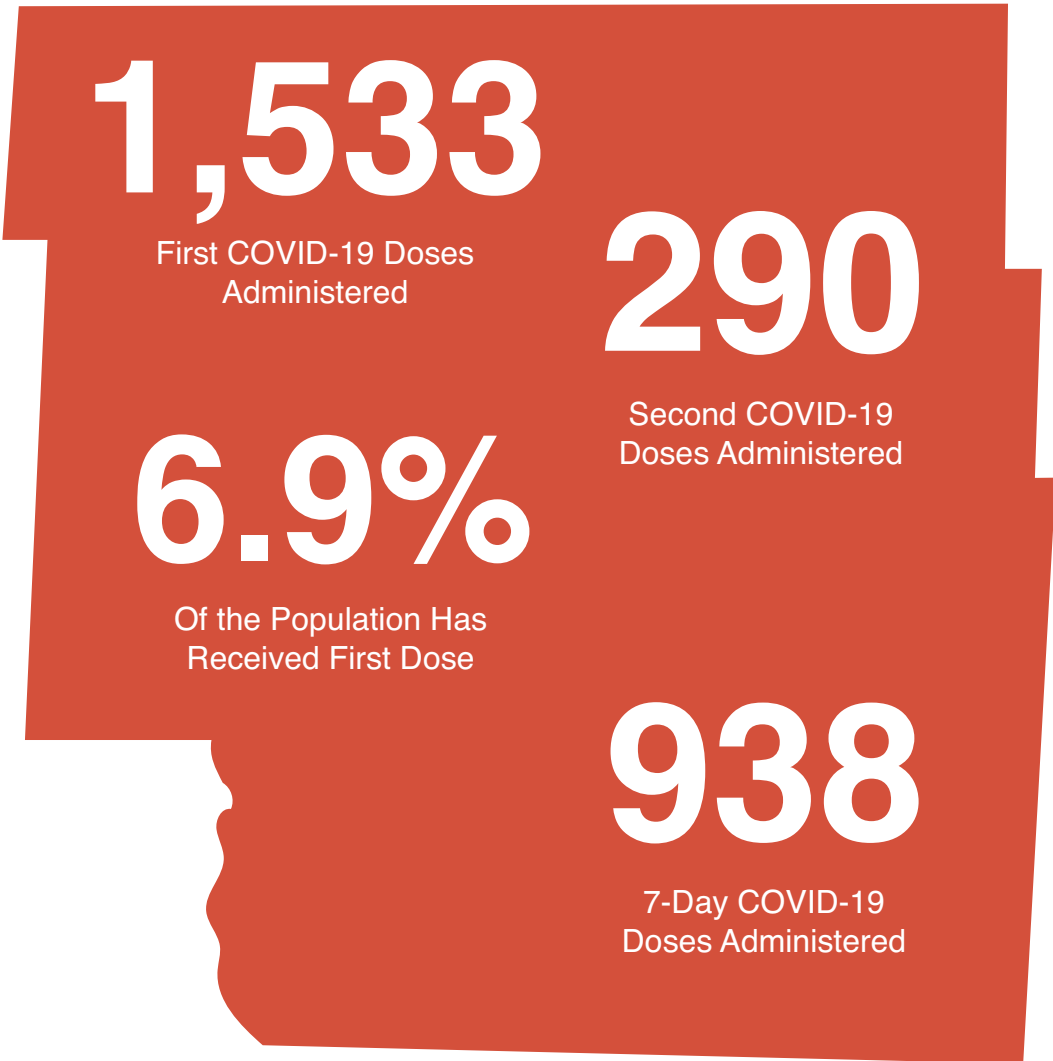
Blackford also explained that the hospital has improved their identification system to help them identify which patients need to be observed for 30 minutes rather than 15 minutes. He said this was something they did at the first clinic, but there was some confusion on who needed to be observed for a longer time period.

Blackford said people who have had reactions to any vaccine in the past should be observed for 30 minutes for any side effects.

Blackford confirmed that the hospital was scheduled to receive 500 Moderna vaccines but will be exchanging those for 600 doses of Pfizer vaccines.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
[NWMISSOURINEWS.COM](https://nwmissourinews.com)

COVID-19 VACCINE DOSES IN NODAWAY COUNTY



MAKAYLA POLAK | NW MISSOURIAN

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Student Senate to allot extra funding

SIDNEY LOWRY
News reporter | @sidney_lowry

The Student Senate has a roll-over budget of \$30,000 from lack of use in the spring 2020 and fall 2020 semesters due to COVID-19. The majority of the money that is allocated to the Senate — which comes from a per credit hour co-circular fee paid by students — is given back to student organizations for traveling and other fees, but since traveling is prohibited and organizations have had a slow start coming back, the money went unused.

Student Senate Treasurer Connor Thompson said that the plans for the money have just started being discussed, but they are talking about putting in nets in the parking lots by the baseball fields.

“We’ve noticed it sometimes takes a while for the school to replace people’s windshields,” Thompson said. “We think it will save everyone a lot of money.”

Thompson said that adding in the nets is estimated to cost around \$5,000, and that adding them in would ultimately improve this problem for both students and the University. They are still pending approval for this project but have other ideas on where to allocate the money.

Student Senate representative Joseph Etheridge said there was talk about having a mural or some type of art made for students on campus.

“One Student Senate representative brought up the idea of doing some art that would be nice for students to look at,” Etheridge said.

The idea for this project would also try to get students and departments on campus to participate and have a say in what it would look like.

“Just having it there and being something for students to look at is something that they would really enjoy,” Thompson said. “Also having local art students and the art department in general design that.”

Another idea presented was to renovate and make improvements to the Bearcat Commons seating areas.

“I know a lot of people complain about the Union seats; I know I do,” Thompson said. “I know there’s been talk about general quality of life improvements, and that’s what students have been asking for.”

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM



A student walks with a sign at the March for Our Rights protest Jan. 30 with other members of the Northwest Students for Life. The organization marched from the International Plaza to the Bell Tower.

EMMA GOVREAU | NW MISSOURIAN

Students gather for protest on abortion

WESLEY MILLER
News Reporter | @wesleymiller360

KAILEE FORD
News Reporter | @kailee_ford

The Northwest Students for Life organization held an anti-abortion march around campus 11 a.m. Jan. 30 starting at the International Plaza.

The protest started off with a speech from junior Samantha Fortik, the coordinator of the march and president of Students for Life. After the speech, attendees walked the small route before finishing with a thank-you talk from Fortik.

Fortik said that originally a group would head to Washington D.C. to participate in the annual March for Life, which happened Jan. 29, and a group would stay to demonstrate on campus. However, due to COVID-19, it was narrowed down to being solely on campus.

Fortik stated they are protesting for the illegalization of abortion, emphasizing her point that the lives of the unborn matter. In her speech, Fortik said that they advocate to abolish abortion to give others the opportunity to live their lives.

“We believe all lives are valuable,” Fortik said.

She said they are marching to show women that there are other options besides abortion. Additionally, she said that the group wants to show their support for women and the unborn.

Her statement on the other group protesting was respectful, and she fully supports them showing their opinion and standing up for what they believe in.

“We don’t personally gain anything by fighting against abortions,” said Fortik. “We’re here to stand for those whose voices will never be heard, for the most vulnerable victims of society.”

Garrett Louiselle is an alumni of Northwest who came back for the march. He mentioned how the cause envelopes a lot of issues, including foster care and care for people with mental illness.

“I think this cause goes a lot farther than abortion,” he said. “This isn’t just pro-life for the unborn, but for everyone.”

Louiselle’s opinion on the other protest group was similar to Fortik’s.

“When both parties can engage

in activities like this, it opens the door for collaboration and finds common ground.”

A group composed of 34 people from the Northwest College Democrats, the unofficial Students for Choice organization and anyone else who wanted to join in, held their own march at the same time.

The Students for Choice group met at the International Plaza, like the Students for Life group. They marched at the same time and followed the same route.

Sophomore Emily Rose, who planned the counterprotest, said she planned it on the same day as the Students for Life intentionally.

“I wanted to make sure both sides were being represented because this campus, sometimes, they just do the pro-life side,” Rose said.

Freshman Grace Thomas said they really wanted to demonstrate that there isn’t just a Students for Life organization at Northwest.

“We wanted representation for the other side of the argument,” Thomas said. “This is our first demonstration as an organization and shows that we are here and want our voices heard.”

Rose said that they’re not necessarily in favor of abortion, they just want there to be a choice and for a woman to have that right to choose. Rose and Thomas said they don’t just hope to be a voice for people wanting abortion but for all women.

When they returned to the starting point of their march, Rose gave a short speech to the others who had gathered. Rose pointed out that she was happy so many people showed despite the Students for Choice not being a legitimate organization yet.

Rose said since Students for Choice is not an official organization yet, they don’t have anything else set for the future right now. However, she did say they hope to do something like this again.

Fortik thanked everyone who came and participated in the march. She said that they are thinking of planning a march again next January.

The UPD, Maryville Public Safety and the Nodaway County Sheriff had officers at the marches to ensure everything was done safely for all participants.

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CRIME LOG

for the week of Feb. 4

Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

Jan. 29
There is an open investigation for harassment at South Complex.

Jan. 31
There is a closed investigation for a liquor law violation at Franken Hall.

Maryville Department of Public Safety

Jan. 28
A summons was issued to **Joshua D. Gary-Turner**, 19, of Beach Park, Illinois, for possession of marijuana on the 100 Block of West Edwards Street.
A summons was issued to **Marcus A. Manuel III**, 19, of Columbia, Missouri, for possession of marijuana and failure to yield on the 100 Block of West Edwards Street.
A summons was issued to **Aspen R. St. Louis**, 18, of Kansas City, Missouri, for possession of marijuana on the 100 Block of West Edwards Street.
Fire Report - Rural: There was an appliance malfunction on the 24000 Block of Jade Road.
An accident occurred between **Taylor R. Fisher**, 19, of Dekalb, Missouri, and **Makayla C. McCoy**, 23, of Faucett, Missouri on the 2300 block of South Main Street. **Fisher** was given a citation for careless and imprudent driving.

Jan. 29
There is an ongoing investigation for financial exploitation on the 400 Block of North Main Street.

Jan. 31
A summons was issued to **Evan J. M. Steele**, 20, of St. Joseph, Missouri, for driving while intoxicated, minor in possession and careless and imprudent driving on South Main Street and Highway 71.
A summons was issued to **Clayton S. Martin**, 20, of St. Joseph, Missouri, for minor in possession on South Main Street and Highway 71.
There is an ongoing investigation for a burglary on the 600 Block of North Mulberry Street.
Ryan J. Madden, 44, was involved in an accident on the 2200 Block of South Main Street. Madden was given a citation for careless and imprudent driving and failure to maintain financial responsibilities.

Feb. 1
An accident occurred between **Donald D. McCrary**, 74, of Conception Junction, Missouri, and **Jim L. Hayes**, 84, on the corner of Carefree Drive and South Main Street.
An accident occurred between **Richard S. Bell**, 48, and **Jerol B. Davison**, 67, on the corner of East First Street and South Main Street. Bell was given a citation for careless and imprudent driving.
An accident occurred between **Hannah L. Scarbrough**, 23, of Kansas City, Missouri, and **Kristin K. Tompkins**, 30, on the 1800 block of South Main Street.

Feb. 2
Lost property - a backpack - was recovered on the 1700 block of East First Street.

Feb. 3
A summons was issued to **Kimberly A. Suggs**, 33, of Ormond Beach, Florida, for not having a valid driver's license and speeding.

DoorDash provides food delivery for 7 Maryville businesses

HAILEY MACH
News Reporter I |@haileymach98

The future of Maryville food delivery service was recently extended beyond the usual pizza and sub restaurants. DoorDash has come to town during a wave of companies starting delivery service nationwide.

Northwest students said they are thrilled to have a delivery service like DoorDash available for convenience. Now that the company is hiring drivers in Maryville, students may also find DoorDash as a way to make some extra cash.

DoorDash is currently available in more than 850 cities across the United States. Maryville, now adding to this list, has delivery access to seven restaurants at the touch of the fingertips.

DoorDash is a technology company that facilitates the concept of door-to-door deliveries. The company originally started in 2013 as a business called Palo Alto Delivery. By keeping merchants and the delivery drivers, or Dashers, a top priority, the service's CEO and two co-founders became billionaires overnight.

Northwest junior Jackson Lohman said that this service is a perfect fit for a town full of busy college students.

"College students typically are a little more lazy; they don't want to go get food all the time," Lohman said, explaining the reason he believed DoorDash came to Maryville.

Lohman said he recently became a Dasher for the delivery service. He completed his first two deliveries Jan. 27, noting that it was a good first experience and "really simple."

"It's been really good," Lohman said about his experience working for DoorDash. "I like how the app functions; it's really easy to use. It's good for a quick, you know, buck."

Lohman said that he applied to DoorDash after hearing from a friend that the service had arrived in Maryville. He enjoys working for the business because of how flexible the job is with his schedule.

Burger King, McDonalds, Joy Wok, Hy-Vee Mealtime, Pizza Ranch, Jimmy John's and Subway are all available for delivery via DoorDash in Maryville.

Northwest senior Lexi Weber is an employee at Subway and commented on how busy the store has been with online orders since DoorDash was brought to their location. She recalls returning from her vacation over winter break to

find that the sandwich shop had added the delivery service.

"Half the sandwiches we make we don't have to be face-to-face with anyone," Weber said. "We just make it without having to talk to someone."

Weber noticed that the foot traffic had decreased in the store, making her feel more comfortable knowing DoorDash could potentially help reduce her risk of exposure to COVID-19. She said that the majority of the orders Subway receives are now placed through an online service.

According to DoorDash's website, the company is committed to the health and safety of the Dashers and the community. The new default setting on the website and the app is the no-contact delivery, meaning that the Dashers will leave a customer's order at the door and will send them an alert when the order arrives.

When receiving a DoorDash order, the shop's computer will alert the employees that someone placed an online order. An employee will click on the order on the screen, and the computer prints out a receipt including everything on that order. During a normal shift, Weber said she completes around 15 orders from DoorDash alone.

"Finally, about time it came to Maryville, Missouri," Senior Sneha Ojha said, expressing her relief that DoorDash became available in town.

Ojha remembers first hearing about the delivery service coming to town Jan. 18 and almost immediately ordering food from the app. She already had the app downloaded from when she ordered food back home in New York City. She said that in New York, delivery typically takes anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour until the food arrives at her door. After ordering DoorDash twice in Maryville, she found that it only takes 15 to 20 minutes to receive her delivery.

"I do not know how to drive; I don't have a car. For someone like me, this is so great," Ojha said. "I don't have to ask my roommate to take me to McDonald's if I want McDonald's. So, this is cool, this is — I love this app."

Ojha said that this app is also extremely convenient when she doesn't have the time to cook or is in a hurry. She said she hopes that her favorite restaurant in Maryville, A&G, will consider adding the DoorDash service to their business.



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN
Becky and Gary Coenen, the co-owners of Coenen Enterprises, Inc., opened Personal Touch Lighting on Main Street in 1997. The Coenens have worked together in the electrical business since they married in 1990.

Lamp store owners reveal the secret

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor I |@andrewwegley

There is a question that floats around Maryville every six months or so, it seems. It has never dominated the town's discourse, like the city's water issue has. It has never prompted rallies or even major journalistic investigations. It's unclear if it's ever even been mentioned in this newspaper or The Maryville Forum — the city's publication of record for more than 150 years. The Forum's website suggests it hasn't.

But it has always lingered here, in this semi-urbanized, 6.4 square mile-sized space amid a rural county, where more than 10,000 residents have made their home, and where 7,000 Northwest students cycle through in four- or five- or six-year patterns, passing through this city in a routine as consistent as time itself.

And each year, as graduates partake in the annual exodus of former students from this community, all bound for elsewhere, the question undoubtedly travels with them, though its roots are firmly here.

The question leaves, and still, it lingers. It is posed in lecture halls and common spaces across Northwest's campus, largely by people who have never sought the answer. It routinely surfaces on Twitter and likely appeared in social media sites of old, like Yik Yak and MySpace — sites where the question has gone asked but unanswered, as it has everywhere. Until now.

"Am I the only one who wonders how a lamp store in Maryville, Missouri, that constantly has at least 50+ lights on, stays in business?????" Veronica Maere asked on Twitter in September 2018 in a tweet that netted nearly 700 likes. The question has appeared on the platform at least four times since then, garnering more than 130 likes each time. "There is no way there's that many people buying lamps."

The answer, like the light that shines from a single bulb illuminating an entire room, is both prevalent and fleeting, both simple and complex.

It is true that there is no way a city of 11,000-something people could or does support Personal Touch Lighting, the outlet along Main Street commonly referred to by many, if not most, Northwest students as "the lamp store." But it is also true that the lamp store — a branch of Coenen Enterprises, Inc., which operates D.B.A Coenen Electric, based in the same

Maryville building — has installed lighting fixtures in buildings and rooms that every Northwest student has set foot in.

"Oh, my God," said Gary Coenen, the founder and co-owner of Coenen Enterprises as he and his wife and co-owner, Becky Coenen, attempted to recall a list of structures their electricians, bulbs and fixtures have helped light. "It's almost hard to remember anymore."

Sitting at a round, glass table in the middle of their businesses's bright, 3,000-square-foot showroom floor on a recent Wednesday morning, the couple agonized as they tried to synopsize their life's work into a short list of notable buildings in northwest Missouri and beyond.

Coenen Electric has done work in what seems to amount to half the city's defining dwellings. There's the Nodaway County Administration Building, which watches over Maryville's downtown square. There are the additions to Eugene Field Elementary and Maryville High School, which each host scores of students each day. There are several fraternity houses, including that of Tau Kappa Epsilon, positioned just off the east end of Northwest's campus. There are a half-dozen buildings on the University's campus itself, like the Lamkin Activity Center, where Gary Coenen and his crew have logged countless hours installing fixtures and wiring fire alarm systems, ensuring Northwest remains safe, and, most often, lit.

And there are places nowhere near here, of course, where Gary and Becky Coenen have ventured in their 23 years of business. Sometimes out of necessity, the company will bid on contracts for installations in other parts of the region or country. And sometimes — as was the case when they designed crystal chandeliers for the Hollywood Palladium on Sunset Boulevard, which is a particular point of pride for the Coenens — the couple and their reliable crew venture elsewhere because they can.

Perhaps that helps explain why, even amid a global pandemic that has ravaged the global economy and forced more than one Maryville business to close permanently, the lamp store is doing just fine. Even late last spring, when COVID-19 first upended daily life and forced much of the country, including Maryville, into temporary lockdowns, Gary Coenen was not worried about the

city's most fabled business.

Much of Coenen Enterprises is built on contracted work. Gary Coenen and a team of five electricians are hired, largely by developers of multifamily residential dwellings, to install wiring and lighting fixtures — a facet that helps the corporation's retail branch remain feasible. The Coenens do not pay their bills by making one-off lamp sales to Maryville residents. Instead, the business survives as a team of electricians, sometimes lucky enough to install hoards of lighting fixtures sold en masse in their own showroom.

And so, in some ways, Personal Touch Lighting is a front — but not the kind that countless Northwest students have theorized about. It's simply the public-facing showroom of a successful electrical business.

"The two work together," said Gary Coenen, 63, who bought the lot his business sits on in 1996 before partially opening the store in 1997. "If you would drive by and say, 'How can this lighting showroom pay your bills by itself?' It'd probably be tough."

"His electrical business is 75% of this," said Becky Coenen, 60, who runs the showroom floor at Personal Touch and has since the couple opened up shop together in what used to be an Arctic Circle restaurant.

"The other —," Becky Coenen said, before her husband of nearly 31 years interrupted, finishing her thought before it had really started.

"They enhance each other," Gary Coenen said. "They help each other out."

While the Coenens are co-owners of the seemingly niche corporation, and even though Becky Coenen spends her days repairing lamps and greeting customers in the brick and mortar showroom, Gary Coenen is undoubtedly the face of Coenen Enterprises.

A native of Harlan, Iowa, Gary Coenen is older than he looks, even if it's only by a few years. His beard is long past graying and there doesn't seem to be much hair underneath the black Mid America ball cap he wore as he told stories about the last 30 years of his life and work. But his energy is distinctly youthful, even as he enters his mid-60s and recovers from hand surgery prompted by carpal tunnel syndrome — undoubtedly a side effect of years as an electrician.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM

FOR THE CULTURE:

College
shaped
my Black
identity

CORBIN SMITH
Columnist
@curly_corbs



Editors note: As a celebration and remembrance for Black History Month, Corbin Smith will be producing a For The Culture column every week of the month of February.

Picture this: tubas slowly blaring with an accompaniment of chiming cymbals. In front of them, girls in outfits that shine more than stars in the night sky whip their hair through the air. As the tubas rumble on, the trumpets sound off to get the crowd rocking in unison. Do you picture Bearcat Stadium? I don't.

My head hosts the Fabulous Dancing Dolls of Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. I hear the sound of the "Human Jukebox" and the crowd screaming along with it.

Historically Black colleges and universities are notorious for these game day atmospheres and impressive marching band performances, but they offer much more than stellar halftime performances.

In my opinion, HBCUs are places where Black students find a sense of community and grow their intelligence with people who can better cater to their cultural backgrounds.

After touring a list of schools over spring break of my sophomore year of high school, I vowed to attend one of these universities. That didn't turn out as I planned.

Deciding to attend Northwest, a predominately white institution, wasn't easy for me nor did it feel like the right decision. It almost felt like I was betraying myself, betraying my Black identity. Originally, I was dead set on going to Jackson State in Jackson, Mississippi, to study journalism and achieve my dream of being HBCU-educated.

At a PWI, I feel like an oddity — as I've stated in previous columns — but touring the campus of HBCUs I never felt like I was getting strange looks, and they felt more comforting. Initially, I thought coming to a PWI would make it harder to connect with my Black identity and feel comfortable with expressing that piece of my soul.

I also had this idea that if I went to an HBCU, I could finally prove that I'm Black. Like there was no better pinnacle of Blackness than to go to a predominately Black school. Thankfully, I was wrong. For the most part.

At Northwest, I've been presented with opportunities that I'm not completely sure I'd get somewhere like Southern, Jackson State or even the MIAA's own Lincoln University. For one, I've gotten the opportunity to create this column with the intention of diversifying readers' exposure.

At an HBCU, it's more likely that everybody has the same stories, and that's the antithesis of journalism. Here, I'm able to branch out to people who haven't heard about the Black experience and start conversations about it.

As backwards as it sounds, I think Maryville has aided in the growth of my Black identity. Being around people that are different from me challenges me.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM

OUR VIEW:

NORTHWEST
NEEDS TO
ADD ANOTHER
CATEGORY TO
THE COVID-19
DASHBOARD:
DEATHS.

And in that new category stands a lone tally mark. Ronda Wiederholt, a Northwest campus dining employee for over three decades, has died from the coronavirus.

It's easy for many of us during this pandemic to become callous. We place distance in between us and the overcrowded intensive care units and the decimated urban neighborhoods and the areas of the country where the cataclysmic effects of the pandemic can be felt in every aspect of the landscape.

A majority of us sat there and read and watched stories of doctors pleading for personal protective equipment, already poverty-stricken communities being plunged further into economic decay and refrigerated semi trucks filled to the brim with the bodies of those taken by this virus because there was no room left in the morgues.

These were the horrifying truths that struck at our core at the beginning of the pandemic, and then as a society, we started to move on. Sports began to be played again; stores and restaurants opened, and we, students, returned to class. All the while we began to fight rather than unify because of this virus.

It seems that everyone longs for the "unity" in the days after the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. A time when the U.S. stood together with a common goal, but that was different. We could see terrorism; it was right there on the television screens, and we had an enemy to hunt, a visible one that could be tracked down even from the other side of the globe and brought to justice. While we should know now that those in power took advantage of our emotions and made foolhardy and dangerous decisions, we will still have the unity of Sept. 12.

But, the enemy that claimed the life

of Wiederholt and millions of others is not like that. It's invisible and imperceptible. Because of its relative infancy, we know so little about it compared to other illnesses and diseases that have plagued our species.

Sometimes, we think certain people have it when they don't, and other times we expect people to be in perfect health, meanwhile, they are infecting countless others. It's a silent killer that's threatening us all, yet we stand divided.

Due to its microscopic nature and wide-ranging degree of effects depending on the individual that has the utter displeasure of playing host to this stain on humankind, people can't agree on what to do. It's not like cancer. Almost all are in agreement with the hating of hijacked cells creating masses that cause the deaths of everyone from smokers who have had three packs a day for five decades to a baby that has had no time to experience the world.

Whenever the word "cancer" is uttered, a chill is sent up everyone's spine. It's the last words a patient wants to hear and the last words a doctor wants to say.

Yet, COVID-19 has taken the lives of 2.2 million people since it emerged thousands of miles away, a little over a year ago, and some are still using their apparently useless frontal lobes to reason that this is merely the flu.

It has taken fathers away from sons, daughters away from mothers. It has gobbled up the lives of grandparents who will never once again hold their grandchildren in their arms and children who died frightened and alone in a hospital bed because those whom they loved couldn't come to see them.

It's easy to take these stories and rationalize them. People die every day, right? Our empathy is not as strong be-

cause we can't see it, because for many of us we haven't had someone we love die from COVID-19. Yet.

Wiederholt was loved, and her death will create a hole in the lives of those who loved her that can never be filled. No words printed in a newspaper, stories recounted at a funeral or condolences given can replace the emptiness felt by those who love and miss her.

She was a member of this community. She walked the same campus that we walk. She interacted with students and staff who may not yet even realize she's gone. She was a person who undoubtedly had an impact, and she will be missed.

For many of us, the "first world problems" of the pandemic will still remain. We will still have to wear something on our face every time we are in a crowd. We will still have to limit the size of our social group. We will need to get a vaccine so we can "return to normal." We will have to deal with limited capacity restaurants and maximum capacity Zoom calls.

To many on this campus, Wiederholt may morph into another statistic, another tally mark, but not for those who cared for her. Coworkers, friends, family and community members will remember her passing and will live on with a void in their lives.

The best we can do is try and meet them in those moments and show we care. A member of the Northwest family has died, and she deserves to be remembered not as one in 2 million-plus, but simply as one person whose loss cannot be quantified or simplified by some dashboard or map.

Ronda Wiederholt August 15, 1960 - January 24, 2021

THE STROLLER:

Tips for your Super Bowl watch party

It's that time of year again. The time when a bunch of guys who could barely see the field in high school try to pretend they understand what Patrick Mahomes goes through during the Super Bowl. No, by all means, Dylan, you were the third-string punter on a 40-man roster in small-town Missouri but please give me valuable insight into what Kermit with a cannon is thinking as he drops back to pass. You guys need help.

So, if you are a football bro looking to maximize the fun for

your hopefully limited watch party, here are some tips.

First, breaking news: women can also like football. And more importantly, they don't need to know every person who has ever played the sport for their fandom to be accepted.

I swear if another one of you sweaty has-beens asks a woman if she knew the Chiefs quality control coach in 1977, I'm going to call upon an ancient deity to curse you and make your feet always slightly cold no matter the

situation.

Second, don't tell me that the pregame video package got you "hype." I couldn't even begin to care how excited you are to sit in the same place for the next five hours on the couch. You being amped for a game you are in no way involved in matters so little, it could be an opinion from a QA-non supporter.

Finally, don't be a phone guy during the game, and don't spoil the game. My name isn't Gary, and I don't have a depressing

marriage and an aloof relationship with my children. That means I don't pay for cable, so my game stream will most likely be a few minutes behind the actual real-life game. So, don't look at Twitter and then look back at me with a rye smile. I'll slap the taste so far out of your mouth, you'll wake up and think "Grey's Anatomy" is well-written.

The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missourian.

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WALK THE TALK:

Natty or bust this year for NW men?

JON WALKER
Sports Editor
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Welcome back, or if you’ve just discovered this column series, welcome. This is Walk The Talk, a mailbag column in which I answer all of your questions regarding Northwest Athletics and then some. Someone asked a question about Nick Cannon last week. In that same column, I answered two

questions about Northwest men’s basketball, so there’s that.

Speaking of the best Division II basketball team in the country, let’s get straight into it.

Is this season natty or bust for the Northwest men?

I think every season throughout the rest of Ben McCollum’s tenure, no matter how long that’ll be, is considered a bust if the Bearcats don’t bring another national title trophy back to Maryville.

I don’t think people comprehend the standard the Bearcats have set. Throughout the last 151 games, McCollum and company are 144-7. That span started Jan. 14, 2015, and along with the lofty number of wins, the Bearcats have claimed seven consecutive MIAA regular-season titles, five straight MIAA Tournament titles and two national championships.

That’s the standard. McCollum knows it. The players that he recruits know it.

The players and McCollum alike know they’re going to take every team’s best shot each time

they step on the court. I’ve been at Northwest for three years and have frequently heard it, including the first press conference I attended with McCollum.

If you’re a basketball player coming to Northwest and you don’t want the pressure of winning a national championship, I’d probably transfer 45 minutes south of Maryville.

But really, how good is Northwest men’s basketball?

Read the previous answer.

I don’t know too many Division II basketball programs that have the expectation of winning a national championship every year.

Will there be football this spring?

I originally had an answer for this, stating that I expected to see the Bearcats in action this spring, but then Northwest coach Rich Wright announced Feb. 3 that Northwest was having a joint practice with Sioux Falls April 10.

So, simply put, yes. There will be football this spring, kinda.

Wright described the meeting

with the Cougars to an NFL-style camp practice, which commonly happens during the NFL preseason before teams square off against each other.

Wright’s familiarity with Sioux Falls coach Jon Anderson played a part in why the Bearcats chose to meet up with the Cougars.

We’ve been here before, though, with the Bearcats canceling their two scrimmages last fall with Washburn and Central Missouri.

So, for the time being, it’s nice to have a target date, but let’s not be too eager for a football practice that is still a couple of months away.

If you do, you might find yourself disappointed come time for the Cougars and Bearcats to practice with each other.

How will spring sports function and deal with the ongoing precautions of COVID-19?

The MIAA released a protocol for spring sports to return to competition Dec. 4, which was pretty much just a reiteration of the protocols for winter sports to play.

Those regulations include test-

ing every Monday. With that, I wouldn’t be surprised if baseball and softball have to constantly wear neck gaiters while playing for the fact that it’s easy to quickly slip on and off faces.

If you’ve paid attention throughout basketball season, you’ve probably noticed that both Northwest men’s and women’s basketball teams took time off and were forced to reschedule games due to positive COVID-19 cases in both programs.

The same thing could happen with baseball, softball, volleyball and soccer. I wouldn’t be surprised if it did either. Not that those programs are doing anything wrong, but that’s just the nature of the world of sports this year.

Walk-the-talk is a mailbag that focuses on all things Northwest Athletics. To submit a question for the next edition of the mailbag, tweet @ByJonWalker or email j.walker.missourian@gmail.com.

MEN’S
CONTINUED FROM A8

The Griffons started the season 4-0 before losing to Pittsburg State Dec. 17. Since the loss to the Gorillas, Western is 4-3. The Griffons, on paper, have been sporadic since then, coming into the matchup losers of their last three, but McCollum has a good idea of what he’ll see when the two teams meet.

“I think they’re very well-coached; they’ve got a lot of talent,” McCollum said about the Grif-

fons. “Defensively, they’re, they’re fantastic, and, offensively, they find a lot of ways to score. They score off a lot of turnovers and just kind of outplay the team they’re playing. So yeah, we’ll have our hands full with them.”

The Griffons have forced an MIAA-best 16 turnovers per contest throughout the first half of the season, eliminating opportunities their opponents have to score. On the other hand, Northwest turns the ball over an average of 11 times per contest, a mark good enough to be the best in the league.

The Bearcats, as McCollum said, will have their hands full with the Griffons, who score the third-most points per game this season in the MIAA.

But despite all of the varying factors—the winning streak, the rivalry that’s been one-sided since McCollum’s arrival at Northwest, the Griffons’ defensive abilities and more—McCollum said the Bearcats aren’t going to treat this game different than any other on the schedule.

“I just don’t totally buy into one game being bigger than the other,” McCollum said. “I just look at every

game essentially the same. No game is bigger than the next.”

Although the Bearcats will be focusing on their matchup with Western for this Saturday, they won’t have to turn around a quick scouting report—they’ll face the Griffons Feb. 9 in St. Joseph, Missouri.

The first matchup between the two was supposed to happen Dec. 12 in St. Joseph, but the Bearcats had a positive test halt action for two weeks. The rescheduled matchup was for Jan. 19, but the Griffons had a positive test halt action for two weeks as well.

It’s not ideal, McCollum said, to play a team back-to-back, but it’s something that he’s accepted due to the modifications that have accompanied playing basketball throughout a pandemic.

“I think it’s always a preference to play teams outside of—for both teams—outside of three, four days,” McCollum said. “If you have an injury, or this year with COVID, if you have something like that, where a kid may be out for both games and that might be a big deal, I think it’s always better to keep those games a part. Not just this game, but every game.”

WOMEN’S
CONTINUED FROM A8

The Griffons are quick-paced, looking to push the ball in transition any chance they can. While Western puts speedy athletes on the court, it’s a young team. Six freshmen and three sophomores round out the 16-person roster.

Western comes into the matchup averaging 60 points, with freshman guard Camille Evans averaging

a team-high 27. She also grabs an average of 8 rebounds a game, making her a threat on both sides of the court.

The inexperience of the Griffons should provide an almost even matchup for the Bearcats, as three freshmen have cracked the starting lineup due to senior guard Kylie Coleman suffering a season-ending ACL injury Jan. 19.

After Missouri Western paused all team activities Jan. 17 due to COVID-19 protocols, the Griffons

have played a mere three opponents. Northwest is looking to use the time off Western has had, plus being in Bearcat Arena, as leverage to get back on track.

“Playing Missouri Western is always an exciting game, especially when it’s at our place. Everyone gets involved, from the team to the fans, and that’s what makes it so much fun to play against a rival school,” Haggard said. “They’ve had some time off, so hopefully we can use that to our advantage, but we definitely can’t overlook them because we know they’re eager to hit us back.”

Last time against Western, Hartnett showed her offensive efficiency, scoring a team-high 18 points, including tallying eight points in the fourth quarter alone. With multiple offensive threats out due to injury for the Bearcats, she will most likely be relied on heavily to put the ball through the hoop.

“Right now, we are relying on her offensively. She’s the one that’s playing with a high level of confidence. That’s why we brought her here,” Meyer said. “Yeah, she’s confident. We’re trying to find that second and third scorer, but right now, she’s been

our main go-to kid and scorer. We got to get production around her.”

Coleman followed closely behind Hartnett during the first matchup with Western, scoring 14 points. Without her presence, someone will have to pick up some production, something Haggard is willing to do.

“I’m just trying to knock down my shots. I’ve had a couple offensively low-scoring games from myself, but with so many players out, we’ve got to add more scoring somewhere in our lineup,” Haggard said. “I’m hoping to get some more drives to just make myself and our offense more of a threat to guard, and if all goes well, we’ll see the ball go in more times than not from beyond the paint.”

Senior Mallory McConkey is another guard Meyer hopes to see shine offensively. McConkey does a good job of getting downhill and can post up in the guard position, especially with a mismatch. She averages 6 points and has scored in double figures three times this season.

Holding Western to 50 points Dec. 12, the Bearcats will look to keep the Griffons under their season average. Typically a team that tries to slow the tempo of the game, Northwest will have to keep Western out of transition and not allow easy baskets.

“If we can get back, get our defense set, kind of build our wall around the paint and limit their shooting, that’s going to be a big thing for us,” Meyer said. “The scouting report is trying to take kids who shoot it at a high level out of the game if possible and staying home on them, get through screens, trailing them, just not letting them get shots off.”

This will be the first home game for the Bearcats since Jan. 23. Meyer believes his team used to play better on the road, but in the third year of his tenure, he is seeing improvement from his team in Bearcat Arena.

For the players, playing in Maryville is a stress reliever, especially when a rival comes to visit.

“Home court advantage is huge; it helps in a lot of ways. You’re more active throughout the day, less time off your legs compared to a road game,” Haggard said. “You have the feel of the court, getting as many pregame shots you need, having the band and our limited fans definitely bring that sense of comfort when playing at home.”

Northwest will look to capture back-to-back wins against the Griffons, a feat that hasn’t been accomplished since 2010. Two wins against a team in one season could be the confidence boost the Bearcats need as they push toward an MIAA conference tournament spot.

“We’re confident we’re moving in the right direction, and we’re focused on that process of getting better every day,” Meyer said. “A good program like Western that has been better than our program over the last 10 years, we’re trying to move up in this league and be a program that was traditionally at the bottom every year to try to get up to that middle-to-top portion. Any time we can beat a team twice in a year is a great thing for us.”

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'Hounds claim Cameron Tournament title

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter I @CalvinSilvers

A 51-42 win over MEC foe Chillicothe Jan. 26 secured Maryville boys basketball's place in the semifinals of the Cameron Tournament, a game the Spoofhounds were set to play two days after the win against the Hornets.

The semifinal matchup put the No. 4-seeded Spoofhounds (9-5) against the No. 1-seeded Battle Spartans (9-6). Battle was the biggest high school in the tournament, coming from Class 6, which is two classes above the 'Hounds. While the Spartans came from a higher class, the Spoofhounds had a game plan, one that was effective enough to eventually lead Maryville to a 56-48 win to advance to the championship game.

It was an up and down fight for the Spoofhounds. Sophomore guard Keaton Stone was the brightest highlight of Maryville's first quarter, scoring 7 of the first 13 points. Heading into halftime, the 'Hounds held a 34-19 lead.

"It once again goes back to that awful showing against Savannah, where kids were trying to do things they weren't supposed to do," Maryville coach Matt Stoecklein said about his offense. "They were taking shots that were not within what they do well. Now, the process of the offense is, 'I take this kind of shot. Marc (Gustafson) takes this kind of shot. And Caden (Stoecklein) takes this kind of shot.' And they really did that."

Despite the double-digit lead that accompanied Maryville into the half, bad news followed the Spoofhounds out of the locker room. Senior guard Trey Houchin walked out in a T-shirt, which differed from the No. 5 jersey he was in for the first half of action. Houchin was healing an ankle injury sustained during football season.

More bad luck plagued Maryville as Stone went down with an ankle injury in the third quarter, bringing forth senior Brady Farnan



Maryville High School sophomore Caden Stoecklein guards the ball during their last home game against Glenwood High School Jan. 16. The Spoofhounds return home Feb. 4 to play Penney High School after five away games.

and junior Spencer Willnerd to replace the injured Spoofhounds. While Farnan and Willnerd couldn't produce the offensive performance seen from Houchin and Stone, their hustle was a needed boost.

"Both of those guys are two of the hardest working guys you have on the team. Brady Farnan, on any drill that involves running, he's almost always in first place. Regardless of his minutes or how much he played in the game before, he's always pushing himself so hard," Matt Stoecklein said. "Spencer is the same way. He'll dive on the ground; he'll do whatever is necessary to help this team win."

A familiar face in the Spoofhounds' program is senior center Gustafson, who used his experience to keep his team ahead. Gustafson tallied 15 points and matched that number in rebounds. With two players out of the starting lineup, Gustafson put the team on his back in the third quarter.

Gustafson made his presence

known down low, at one point scoring 9 of Maryville's 10 points, a stretch that began in the middle of the third quarter and leaked into the fourth.

"He's had some games where he's been able to score inside and not score inside, and we've been really working on him being more powerful, and day-by-day he gets just a little bit better at that," Matt Stoecklein said. "He also has to remember he may have a game where he only scores 6 points, but he changes the other team's shots inside. His presence in that paint, even when he's not scoring, he's a big factor for us."

The win moved Maryville to the championship game Jan. 30 against the No. 3-seeded Smithville Warriors (10-8). The Spoofhounds were in a closer contest compared to Battle, but the perpetual energy pushed the 'Hounds to a 49-43 victory.

Stone did not suit up for the matchup, still healing from his injury suffered during the semifinal game. Stone is expected to be out

for two weeks, the soreness from his ankle being a red flag to the Maryville coaching staff.

Houchin surprised Maryville fans as he came out for warmups in his jersey. Playing physical football games on Friday nights in the fall, Houchin persuaded his coaches to let him out on the court.

"Trey (Houchin) is day-to-day. ... He can go whenever he can go," Matt Stoecklein said. "Now, we try to limit him a little bit in practice, and we still try to get him a good little workout. He's going to play until he says he can't play."

While the offense proved vital in the win against Battle, the Spoofhounds' defense was put on full display in the championship game. Maryville held the Warriors to 4 points in the first quarter, locking down notable sophomore guard Ryker Edwards, who averaged 20 per contest ahead of the matchup. To begin the third quarter, the 'Hounds' defense kept Smithville scoreless and went on an 8-0 run.

UP NEXT

MHS v Penney
6:15 p.m. Feb. 4
'Hound Pound

"Some of the boys were over with Caden (Stoecklein) watching the Smithville semifinal game. At the end of that game, Caleb Kreizinger texted the group and said he's guarding Ryker," Matt Stoecklein said. "The mentality of, 'I want to guard their best player,' by my players speaks volumes for how we're playing defense so much better now."

Kreizinger lived up to his words, holding Edwards to 6 points. Kreizinger finished with 13 points, including a jumper in the fourth quarter to increase the then-2-point gap between Maryville and Smithville. As the ball fell through the hoop, a whistle signaled a foul, and Kreizinger made the free throw.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM

Girls secure blowout win over Lathrop despite no head coach

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter I @curly_corbs

Maryville girls basketball (15-1) returned from an extended trip to Cameron, Missouri, to defend an eerily quiet 'Hound Pound from Lathrop (9-9) Feb. 2. The Spoofhounds were missing a key component in coach Quentin Albrecht due to unknown reasons but confirmed via text that his absence was unrelated to COVID-19.

For the night, assistant coach Kelly Obley commanded Maryville to a 60-43 victory. Obley credited Albrecht for how the girls played in their head coach's absence.

"Albrecht has done a phenomenal job of developing a program that can be successful no matter who's coaching," Obley said. "In his absence, we obviously miss that leadership, but we also had the skills necessary to be successful. The girls just really took it on their own that they knew what needed to be done, and they were able to coach themselves."

The 'Hounds showed they could play without Albrecht as they jumped out to an early 20-7 first-quarter lead. Senior guard Serena Sundell accounted for 13 of those 20 points with 2 3-pointers.

Moving into the second quarter, the scoring mirrored that of the first. Lathrop was able to score 11 points but couldn't figure out how to stop Maryville's prolific offense. With nearly 2 minutes left in the first half, sophomore guard Anastyn Pettlon received the ball, and with space to shoot, settled into position and let off a 3-pointer that easily sank in the nylon net.

With COVID-19 restrictions limiting attendance, the most reaction that could be heard was a crowd of golf claps, coupled with the announcer roaring to a relatively empty crowd that Pettlon scored. Additionally, the cheerleaders cheered to bleachers and finished with sarcastic comments on how packed they were.

Maryville finished the half with a 36-18 lead over the Mules. Pettlon added to the scoreboard with a pair of 3-pointers, bringing her total to 9 points. Sundell matched Pettlon's total in the second quarter and brought her total to 22 at the half.

"It feels good," Sundell said. "Lathrop's always a good team that we play against. To come out and



Maryville High School senior guard Serena Sundell dribbles past a Lathrop High School player at their home game Feb. 2. The Spoofhounds won 60-43 leaving them 15-1.

take care of business, it felt good. It felt good to know we can come out and have that fast start and get ahead of them early."

At the start of the second half, Sundell showed a hint of frustration after committing a foul under the basket, sending a Mule to the free throw line. She said that body

language is something she wants to work on after this game. Her frustration quickly melted away as she returned to play, and her teammates began having fun on the court.

Early in the third quarter, Sundell went up for a run-of-the-mill shot under the basket. To her surprise, she miscalculated where she

was, and the ball bounced off the bottom of the backboard and into the hand of a Lathrop defender. In response, she trotted back on de-

UP NEXT

MHS v St. Joseph Central
4 p.m. Feb. 6
St. Joseph, Missouri

fense with an awkward look but smiled it off and focused on the other end of the court.

Similarly, Pettlon missed a layup during her fast break opportunity and proceeded to laugh after announcing to her team that she missed. Her teammates recovered the ball and put it back through the hoop to save her the embarrassment of a turnover.

For the rest of the third quarter, the Spoofhounds and Mules traded scores, but Maryville widened its gap to 21. The score after three quarters of play was 52-31. Sundell broke the 30-point barrier with 31 points, while Pettlon reached 12 points for the night, which is what she eventually finished with.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
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Star QB among 29 football signees

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

Rich Wright knew back in August that COVID-19 was going to impact the way he recruited for not only the 2021 class, but the unforeseeable future, too.

It's a struggle that he's had to manage since the NCAA announced in the fall that football players around the country, at all levels, weren't going to have to exhaust a year of eligibility to play throughout the ongoing pandemic.

"The repercussions of this isn't just the senior class; it's each year," Wright said Aug. 24 about the extra year of eligibility. "So, it's going to impact your recruiting. ... It'll go out five years, and I've already had to think about it."



After thinking about it for at least this season, Wright and Northwest football signed 29 athletes to come to Maryville this fall, making it the smallest class he's signed since 2017, his first year at the helm of the program.

"It was a big impact," Wright said about the NCAA's announcement and how that affected the size of this year's class. "We're sitting here right now with a roster of 133 guys. Logistically, that's kind of a nightmare, so we knew we couldn't have a big class."

This year's class was headlined by Tyron "Tank" Young, a 3-star running back out of Saint Thomas Aquinas High School in Overland Park, Kansas. Young took to Twitter Feb. 1 to announce his top choices, and Northwest was among

the final four with Oklahoma State and Kansas State.

Ultimately, Young opted to become a Bearcat, turning away from Division I competitors, making him one of the highest-ranked recruits of the Wright era.

Along with Young, Wright was determined to claim Chris Ruhnke, a quarterback from Platte County High School in Platte City, Missouri. Ruhnke was a finalist for the Simone Award, which is given to the most outstanding high school football player in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

"I think he was our guy because he did everything that we wanted in a quarterback," Wright said. "I made the statement that he made everybody around him better. I feel like he willed (Platte County) to the

state championship this year."

Wright said Ruhnke checked all of the metaphorical boxes the Northwest coaches presented during his visit to Maryville before last fall. From that moment, Wright and first-year offensive coordinator Todd Sturdy knew Ruhnke's talents were too good to let go to another school, specifically in the MIAA, where the quarterback had more than a handful of offers.

"He's got a big-time arm," Wright said. "When he came out this summer and was throwing for us, he could make every throw; he wasn't rattled."

FULL STORY ONLINE:
[NWMISSOURINEWS.COM](#)

BEARCATS SET
SPRING DATE

Northwest football is planning to have a joint practice with the University of Sioux Falls April 10, coach Rich Wright announced Feb. 3.

Wright broke the news amid an on-air interview regarding the 2021 recruiting class with John Coffey and Matt Tritten of KXCV-KRNW Wednesday afternoon.

Wright described the meeting with the Cougars to an NFL-style camp practice, which commonly happens during the preseason before teams square off.

Wright's familiarity with Sioux Falls coach Jon Anderson played a part in the Bearcats' choice.

'Cats aim to answer bell



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Junior guard Trevor Hudgins faces Central Oklahoma guard Carson Calavan near midcourt in the first half of Northwest's 90-68 win over UCO Jan. 23 at Bearcat Arena. Hudgins scored 20 points in the matchup, adding 9 assists and 5 steals. Hudgins trailed only senior forward Ryan Hawkins in the point category for Northwest after Hawkins paced the team with 23.

Women
hopeful
for place
in MIAA
Tourney

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter | @CalvinSilvers

The MIAA announced Jan. 21 that it was changing the format of its conference tournament, which included a shortened field of eight teams compared to the traditional 10. After a 57-47 victory on the road against Newman, the Northwest women's basketball team sat in the eighth spot with a chance to move higher, playing three games in five days.

However, the onslaught of games did not favor the Bearcats.

"The biggest thing is our offensive shot-making ability. We have really long scoring droughts right now that really hurt us. Obviously, we have three kids out, but we still are struggling to hit open shots," Northwest coach Austin Meyer said. "For the most part, we've been pretty solid defensively, but your defense can only carry you for so long before you have to be able to



GRACE ELROD | NW MISSOURIAN

Northwest women's basketball sophomore guard Jayna Green attempts to block a shot during the Bearcats' Jan. 21 game against Newman in Bearcat Arena. The women will be back home Feb. 6 against Missouri Western.

put the ball in the basket."

Now sitting at ninth in the MIAA, the Bearcats have eight remaining games to propel them into the postseason tournament. For senior guard Jaelyn Haggard, she knows there's now an added sense of urgency.

"There definitely is that thought creeping in the back of your mind. You obviously don't want to think about that, and we are very process-driven," Haggard said. "As a senior, and now being a part of the tournament versus watching from home years before, there is that added motive to each game that pushes you to make your season as long as possible."

The next matchup for the Bearcats is Feb. 6 in Bearcat Arena

UP NEXT

NW v Missouri Western
1:30 p.m. Feb. 6
Bearcat Arena

na against rival Missouri Western, who the Bearcats played earlier this year. The Dec. 12 contest in St. Joseph, Missouri, came down to the wire, with freshman guard Molly Hartnett finishing a layup with 2.4 seconds remaining to seal a 51-50 victory. That was the second win in five seasons against the Griffons and the first win on the road against Western in 10 years.

No. 3 men look to
add to lofty winning
streak over Western

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

Ben McCollum transferred to Northwest in 2001 to follow his basketball aspirations.

Before becoming a Bearcat, McCollum spent two years at North Iowa Area Community College, where he was twice tabbed as an all-region standout.

McCollum's first year in Maryville marked the first time he'd face the Bearcats' rival — Missouri Western.

The Griffons beat McCollum and company 88-84 Jan. 13, 2001. But that doesn't matter for the now-coach, who has been at the helm of the program since the beginning of the 2009-10 season, and who has a record of 22-2 against Western as a head coach.

The No. 3 Bearcats (record after Tuesday's game) will get a chance to win their 18th consecutive game against the Griffons (8-4) Feb. 6 in Bearcat Arena, where McCollum was handed the aforementioned loss more than 20 years ago.

And despite not losing to Western since Jan. 12, 2013, McCollum said his team won't have to change or do anything different for the Griffons, more so play to the level that



UP NEXT

NW v Missouri Western
3:30 p.m. Feb. 6
Bearcat Arena

created the program's continuous success in the first place.

"I think in order to continue to sustain success, you absolutely have to have a focus on the process in the understanding of, 'You only, literally, have the present moment,'" McCollum said. "When you get excited about certain games or certain things, I think a lot of times you lose your focus on improving and getting better, and that's why I feel like we've had success over time. Not necessarily just against them, but against anyone just because of that focus."

The Bearcats captured an 80-56 win over the Griffons in the MIAA Tournament Semifinals March 7 at Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City, Missouri.

McCollum has been at the forefront of countless blowout wins over Western, but he's not necessarily expecting this go-around to mimic the result of last year's season finale between the two programs.